531 Saturday, but not scratched until Sunday afternoon;
796 making them earlier is considered a sin." The Lithuanian Easter eggs, too, are hardly ever sold in the market. They are gifts of the godparents or the mother for the children and tokens for friends and for the clergy of the town. While the neighboring Letts know only eggs of one color, the Lithuanian margučiai are already attested in the sixteenth century. At the present time the old custom has remained alive primarily in the district of Trakai.

286 Weaving and Related Techniques

That Lithuanian folk art--we may think of the folk song or of the grave crosses, or of any branch at all--forms a unity in its innermost nature and /136/ has created an artistic style of its own, has been pointed out by many critics. The sphere of this art comprises the whole life of a rural culture with a rare compactness; one thing is related to the other, and as the last field, the village art of weaving harmoniously joins this circle.

Flax, harvested in one's own field, spun on one's own spinning wheel, woven on a peasant loom, has been a familiar material in Lithuania since very olden times. Connected with its processing was the song, whose rhythm followed the movement of the loom, and whose words extolled the weavers who knew how to weave fine patterns. Thus in this art there is nothing foreign; it does not rest in the hands of a few--every girl, every woman in the villages still knows it today. And old women still know today that ancient art of spinning where the flax wrapped around a distaff is spun off with the aid of a spindle which the spinner turns with her hand.

286 The colors, too, with which the threads
386 were dyed, were originally quite natural. They were produced from earth, iron ore, plants, birch

286 leaves, oak and alder bark, and the method was
386 guarded as a family secret. Their production was very laborious. The plants were broken up and cooked with the thread; the ashes of the plants were used as a stain. Always only the thread was dyed, never the finished fabric. Thus one obtained serene colors of unlimited durability. Aprons a hundred years old exhibit a quiet brilliance which is still enchanting today. Although the natural colors have gradually been supplanted by modern aniline colors, knowledge of the old coloring technique is still preserved in many peasant families.

286 The use of colors change. Brown, blue, and
301 red were probably the oldest colors. To them was
531 added green. The pattern originated on a white background. We can best recognize the Lithuanian interpretation of color in the juostos, those colorful decorative ribbons which /137/ serve as ribbons for belts and aprons, as fastenings of fur coats, and as decorations for the girls. They are distributed across the whole country, but show provincial differences both in the colors and in the patterns and techniques. Their coloration is analyzed in a fine manner by Karl Brammer: (44)

[113]

44. Karl Brammer, "Litauische Webereien," Litauenbuch, loc. cit., p. 52.

"The nature of complementary colors is grasped here with astonishing sureness; an error never occurs. Red and greenish blue, orange and cyanic blue, greenish yellow and violet are placed next to each other in striking fashion. Furthermore the skillful use of white with opposite colors has a very fine effect. From the use of red and yellow on a black background (*) it can be clearly be seen

* The latter occurs only very rarely. V.J.

that the relationship between dark and brilliant